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HEBREW TEXT.

¹ R omits מעבר להנה; E reads מעבר הנה. — ² A. האחר; או or אחר. — ³ RA העיר. — ⁴ ושוקים. — ⁵ R omits. — ⁶ A adds שם. — ⁷ R omits till the next המלך. — ⁸ A. יתרכס. — ⁹ R אחר (this suggests a lacuna); A substitutes for 'זהם גו' עז שיתרפא. — ¹⁰ A adds גול. — ¹¹ R מִסְתָּן. — ¹² דאר אל מראתאן. — ¹³ R omits. — ¹⁴ A omits till the next continuing, which argues a lacuna. — ¹⁵ R omits החורק. — ¹⁶ R omits. — ¹⁷ A omits till the next וליבו. — ¹⁸ R. שבנתי. — ¹⁹ R וכל חדש. — ²⁰ A. והולכים לרכס. — ²¹ A. לעיר. — ²² BM בנרא; R. נביר; ונדיקס אותם פקרי, otherwise like text, but continues. — ²³ R. חסר. — ²⁴ R omits בזה. — ²⁵ R. ויש בנביר ארבעים אף יהודים. — ²⁶ A inverts: ובשלה ובהשקע. — ²⁷ A. גול חתך ד.

ישיבות מתעסקין בתורה¹. ובעיר עשרה ישיבות². ראש הישיבה הגדולה הרב ר' שמואל בן עלי ראש ישיבת גאון יעקב לו³ (sic) והוא מיוחס עד משה רבי' ע"ה ראש הישיבה השנייה⁴. ור' חנניה אחיו סגן הלוי. ור' דניאל יסוד⁵ הישיבה השלישית. ור' אלעזר החבר ראש הישיבה הרביעית. ור' אלעזר בן צמח ראש הסדר והוא מיוחס עד שמואל הנביא הקרני⁶. והוא ואחיו יודעים לנגן הזמירות כמו שהיו המשוררים נוגנים⁷ בזמן שבית המקדש קיים והוא ראש הישיבה החמישית⁸. ור' חסדאי⁹ פאר החברים ראש הישיבה הששית. ור' חני¹⁰ ראש הישיבה¹¹ השביעית. ור' עזרא ראש¹² הנקרא סוד הישיבה והוא ראש הישיבה השמינית. ור' אברהם הנקרא אבו טאהר¹³ ראש הישיבה התשיעית. ור' זכאי בן בסתאני **סד** הנשיא בעל הסיום. והם הנקראים עשרה | בטלנים¹⁴ שאין מתעסקין בדבר אחר אלא בצרכי צבור¹⁵; ובכל ימי השבוע הם דנין לכל אנשי הארץ היהודים¹⁶. חוץ מיום שני שבאים כלם לפני הרב שמואל הוא¹⁷ ראש ישיבת גאון¹⁸. ועומד עם העשרה בטלנים ראש הישיבה¹⁹ לרן²⁰ לכל הבאים אליהם. ובראש²¹ של כולם דניאל בן חסדאי²² הנקרא אדונינו

¹ יש בעיר עשר — R omits from the preceding ישיבות; A ישיבות; both continue יראש. — ² Evidently a copyist's misreading (from a faded text?) for הלוי, since the brother is a Levite; R הלוי; for A see the following note. — ³ R inverts: ור' חנניה אחיו סגן הלוי ראש הישיבה השנייה; this was also the order in the source from which BM is derived, as the context and the ו of חנניה prove; likewise in the source of EA, which have, however, preserved only (E השנייה) ראש השנייה (השנייה) סגן הלוי יעקב | סגן הלוי, they omit by dittology from הלוי to סגן הלוי (by the | Asher probably indicates a disturbance in the text); EA also omit הישיבה; cp. note II. — ⁴ סוד; E סוד; A סוד; cp. text below after עזרא. — ⁵ Instead of הקרני: R הרמתי; E הרמתי; A הרמתי; E omits. — ⁶ משוררים ומנגנים. — ⁷ R omits החמישית and the rest till after התשיעית, leaving only the words סוד הישיבה. This is one of several evidences of wilful contraction by the copyist. — ⁸ EA חסדאי. — ⁹ EA insert הנשיא. — ¹⁰ EA omit הישיבה. E has here ראש, and from what intervenes between these two words the following sentence is formed: עזריה ראש הישיבה השביעית; and put above after החמישיה (perhaps from a correction in the margin); A has | indicating a disturbance in the text before him. — ¹¹ A omits till the next ראש; the word seems redundant here. — ¹² E אבוטאהר. — ¹³ A זכאי בן בסתאני. — ¹⁴ שאין מתעסקין אלא לצרכי. — ¹⁵ בעל הסיום ראש הישיבה הנשיא הם הנקראים בטלנים. — ¹⁶ R omits היהודים. — ¹⁷ R שמואל. — ¹⁸ הוא. — ¹⁹ RA יעקב. — ²⁰ Here begins MS. O = Oxford, see Introduction. It coincides with the text except when the contrary is stated in the notes. — ²¹ RAO יבראשם. — ²² ר' דניאל בן חסדאי. R omits כלם.

אל ימן¹ ודי אר כלך² וכל ארץ ארם נהרים³ היושבים בהרי אררט
וארץ אל ניה⁴ היא ארץ מוקפת⁵ הרים ואין לה⁶ יציאה אלא על⁷ שערי
ברזל שעשה אלכסנדר⁸ ושברו אותם ושם האומה⁹ הנקראת אלן¹⁰ וארץ
סיביריה¹¹ וכל ארץ התוגרמים¹² עד הרי אסוה¹³ וארץ גורנן הנקראים
גורגנין היושבים על¹⁴ נהר גיחון: והם הנרגשי¹⁵ והם מתעסקים¹⁶ בדת
הנוצרים ועד שערי סמרכנת¹⁷ וארץ¹⁸ טובות וארץ¹⁹ הודו ראש הנולה
סג נותן להם רשות בכל הקהלות האלו לשום על כל²⁰ קהל וקהל | רב וחון
כי הם באים אליו לקחת הסמיכה²¹ ורשות ומביאין לו²² דורונות ומתנות
מאפסי הארץ. ויש לו פונדקאות²³ וגנות ופרדסים בבבל ונחלות רבות
מאד²⁴ מנחלת אבותיו ואין אדם יכול²⁵ לגזול ממנו כלום ויש לו בפונדקאות²⁶
של יהודים ובשווקים ובסוחרי הארץ מס ידוע בכל²⁷ שבוע ושבע²⁸ חוץ
ממה שמביאין מארץ מרחק²⁹. והאיש עשיר גדול וחכם³⁰ בפסוק ובתלמוד
ואוכלים³¹ על שלחנו רבים מישראל בכל יום. אבל העת³² שמקימן³³
ראש הנולה³⁴ הוא מוציא ממון גדול על המלך ועל השרים והסגנים³⁵
ביום שעושה לו המלך הסמיכה³⁶ על השררה ומרכיבין³⁷ אותו במרכבת
המשנה³⁸ ומביאין אותו מבית המלך הגדול³⁹ לביתו בתופים ובמחולות
והוא עושה הסמיכה⁴⁰ לראש⁴¹ הישיבה. והיהודים שבמדינה⁴² תלמידי

¹ R (Gr.) אלימן, (Neub. = A); O האלימאן (contraction); A אלימן;
ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ² R (Gr. and N.) — ³ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ⁴ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ⁵ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ⁶ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ⁷ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ⁸ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ⁹ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ¹⁰ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ¹¹ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ¹² R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ¹³ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ¹⁴ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
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E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ¹⁷ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ¹⁸ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ¹⁹ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ²⁰ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ²¹ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ²² R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ²³ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ²⁴ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ²⁵ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ²⁶ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ²⁷ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ²⁸ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ²⁹ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ³⁰ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ³¹ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ³² R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ³³ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ³⁴ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ³⁵ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ³⁶ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ³⁷ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ³⁸ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ³⁹ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ⁴⁰ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ⁴¹ R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R. — ⁴² R omits ארם through similarity to ארץ and continues
E ווריא בך A; ודאר אלנך O; ירד בך (Gr. and N.) R.

חכמים ועשירים גדולים ובעיר בגדאד¹ כ"ח | בתי כנסיות ליהודים² בין סד
 בגדאד³ ואל כרך⁴ אשר מעבר לנהר⁵ חדקל כי הנהר חולק את המדינה.
 ובניסה⁶ גדולה של ראש הגולה מבניין עמורי⁷ שיש מכל מיני צבעים
 ומצופים בכסף וזהב⁸ ובעמודים אותיות זהב של פסוקי⁹ תלים. ושם לפני
 הארון מדרגות מאבני¹⁰ שיש כמו עשרה. ובמדרגה העליונה יושב ראש
 גולה¹¹ עם נשיאי¹² בית דוד: ומדינת בגדאד¹³ עיר גדולה עשרים¹⁴
 מילין בהקפת העיר והיא¹⁵ ארץ תמרים וגנות ופרדסים שאין כמוה¹⁶
 בכל ארץ שנער ובאים אליה בסחורה מכל הארצות. ובה אנשים חכמים
 פילוסופים יודעים בכל חכמה וחרטומים¹⁷ יודעים בכל מיני¹⁸ כשוף. ומשם
 לגזיגן הנקראת רסן שני ימים¹⁹ והיא עיר גדולה ובה כמו חמשת²⁰ אלפים
 מיישראל²¹. ובתוכה כנסת של רבה²² והיא גדולה והוא קבור²³ סמוך
 לכנסת. ותחת²⁴ קברו מערה קבורים בה י"ב מתלמידיו: ומשם יום
 לבבל²⁵ היא בבל הקדומה²⁶ ההרבה ומהלך²⁷ שלשים מיל בהרבותיה²⁸. סה
 ועדיין ארמון נבוכד נצר מצוי²⁹ שם הרב ויראים בני אדם ליכנס בו
 מפני הנחשים והעקרבים שבתוכו³⁰. וקרוב משם מהלך³¹ מיל יושבים
 שלשת³² אלפים מיישראל³³ ומתפללים בכניסת עליית³⁴ דניאל ע"ה היא
 העלייה³⁵ הקדומה שבנה דניאל והיא בנויה אבני גזית ולבנים³⁶. ובין
 הכנסת והארמון של נבוכד נצר מקום אתון נורא³⁷ אשר הושלכו

¹ BM בגדאד; R בגדד. — ² RO omit ליהודים. — ³ As note 1. — ⁴ RA ויכנס. — ⁵ A omits לנהר. — ⁶ RO ויכנס. — ⁷ E and Edd. ויכנס אל כרך. — ⁸ O = text; R (and E) מצופים זהב ובכסף; A reads וזהב. — ⁹ R omits עמורי. — ¹⁰ O = text; R omits יושב. — ¹¹ A omits יושב. — ¹² R omits יושב. — ¹³ MS. בגדאד; R בגדד. — ¹⁴ O omits the next three words. — ¹⁵ R omits יושב. — ¹⁶ R omits יושב. — ¹⁷ R omits יושב. — ¹⁸ R omits יושב. — ¹⁹ R omits יושב. — ²⁰ R omits יושב. — ²¹ R omits יושב. — ²² R omits יושב. — ²³ R omits יושב. — ²⁴ R omits יושב. — ²⁵ R omits יושב. — ²⁶ R omits יושב. — ²⁷ R omits יושב. — ²⁸ R omits יושב. — ²⁹ R omits יושב. — ³⁰ R omits יושב. — ³¹ R omits יושב. — ³² R omits יושב. — ³³ R omits יושב. — ³⁴ R omits יושב. — ³⁵ R omits יושב. — ³⁶ R omits יושב. — ³⁷ R omits יושב.

בו¹ חנניה מישאל ועזריה והיא² עמק יזעו לבל: ומשם החמשה פרסאות³ לחילה. ושם כמו עשרת אלפים מישראל⁴. ובה ארבע⁵ בתי כנסיות אחת של רבי מאיר והוא קבור לפניו⁶: וכנסת מר קשישא⁷ והוא קבור לפניו. וכנסת רב⁸ זעירי בר חמא⁹ וכנסת רב מארי¹⁰ ומתפללים שם יהודים בכל יום¹¹: ומשם ארבעה מילין למגדל שבנו דור הפלגה והוא בנוי מלבנים הנקראים אגור¹² ואורך¹³ יסודו כשני¹⁴ מילין וברחבו כארבעי¹⁵ סו אמה וארכו¹⁶ | כמו מאתים אמה¹⁷ ובין עשרה עשרה¹⁸ אמות דרכים ובהם שם¹⁹ עולים בעיגול מסבבין²⁰ עד למעלה ורואין ממנו²¹ מהלך עשרים²² מילין כי הארץ מישור²³ ובתוכו²⁴ נפלה אש מן השמים ובקעה אותו²⁵ עד התהום. ומשם חצי יום לכפרי²⁶ ושם כמו מאתים²⁷ יהודים. ושם כנסת ר' יצחק נפחא והוא קבור לפניו: ומשם שלש פרסאות לכנסת יחזקאל הנביא ע"ה שעל²⁸ נהר פרת ובמקום הכנסת כמו²⁹ ששים מגדלים ובין³⁰ מגדל ומגדל כנסת ובחצר הכנסת התיבה ואחורי³¹ הכנסת קברו של יחזקאל³² ועליו כיפה גדולה ובניין יפה עד מאד מבניין הקדמונים המלך³³ יבניה מלך יהודה ול"ה³⁴ אלף יהודים שבאו עמו כשהוציאו³⁵ אויל מרורך מבית הכלא וזה המקום על³⁶ נהר פרת מצד אחד ומצד אחר נהר פרת³⁷. ויבניה וכל הבאים עמו חקוקים בכותל יבניה בראש סו יחזקאל³⁸ | בסוף. ואותו מקום עד היום מקודש לישראל מקדש מעט

A; R מילין¹. — והוא A². — השליכו שם O; הישליכו שם A; השליכו בו R³ יהודים מישראל E; מיהודים O; יהודים R⁴. — ומשם לחילה החמשה מילין read ארבע O; ארבע R omits (a combination of both readings?). — לפניו לפניו A omits till the next reading. — קשישא R; see note 9. — חמא A O omits, omitting רוב. — מארי R¹⁰. — ומתפללים שם יהודים R¹¹ A inverts: לאגור. Ed. C. לאגור; E and Ed. F. לאגור. — כל יום יהודים R O; ורחבו כארבעה A; ורחבו כארבעה R (Neub.). — שנים E¹⁴. — אורך A; ובין אמה; R omits from the preceding reading. — ובארכו O¹⁶. — מאתים וארבעים; שם O; שבהם R¹⁹. — עשר ועשר E; עשרה ועשרה A O¹⁸. — כמו מאה קנים A; ממנה A; עד R²¹. — ומסבבין A; מסבבין R²⁰. — שם ובהם A. — ער היסוד בה E; אותה R²⁵. — ובתוכה R O²⁴. — רחבת ירים ומישור A²³. — כגורו A²⁹. — הנביא אשר על E²⁸. — לפנה A; לכפר מזרח R²⁶. — (וכן כל E); ובין כל A³⁰. — is illegible (or omitted?). — אחריו A O³¹. — הנביא עלה O; בן בתי הכהן; A adds. — והאחר A O³² omit. — כשהוציאו אותו A³⁵. — החמשה וששים A³⁴. — הקדמונים המלך R³³. — מצד ומצד אחד (האחר E) נהר A³⁷. — the | probably indicates lacuna or illegibility). — ויחזקאל הנביא E; ויחזקאל O³⁸.

ובאים מארץ מרחק¹ להתפלל מראש השנה ועד² יום הכפורים ועושים שם ישראל³ שמחה גדולה. וגם ראש גולה⁴ וראשי ישיבות שבאים⁵ שם מבגדאד⁶ וחונים על פני השדה בשני⁷ מילין ובאים שם סוחרים⁸ ערב. ושם יריד גדולה הנקראת פאריה⁹ ומוציאין ספר מגויל¹⁰ מכתיבת יחזקאל הנביא וקורין בו ביום הכפורים. ועל קברו של יחזקאל¹¹ עשית דולקת בכל יום¹² וכל הלילה שלא תכבה¹³ מיום שהאיר אותה הוא בעצמו וחולפין הפתילות ומוסיפין שמן עד היום הזה. ושם בית גדול של הקדש¹⁴ והוא מלא ספרים¹⁵ ומבית ראשון ומבית¹⁶ שני שם¹⁷ ספרים. וכל מי¹⁸ שאין לו בן יקדיש שם ספריו¹⁹ ומביאין היהודים הבאים שם להתפלל²⁰ מארץ פרס ומדי ממון שנודרין על עצמן²¹ אנשי הארץ לכנסת יחזקאל הנביא. ויש²² לכנסת נחלות וקרקעות וכפרים שהיו ליכניה המלך וכשבא משוגע²³ קיים הכל לכנסת יחזקאל. וגם²⁴ בני גדולי ישמעאל²⁵ באים

ואוחו A; ואוחו (אוחו. Neub.) מקום מקדש ליש' ושמו מ' מצט ובאים שם מ' R¹ —
— הגולה A⁴ omits. —² O A —. המקום עד היום הזה מ' מצט באים מ' שם
—³ R A O —. באים MS. —⁴ מבגדאד R; מבגדאד, as usual. —⁵ E ז' for כב', hence
A פירה R; גדול הנקרא A⁹ —. סוחרים בני A; סוחרים בני O⁸ —. שנים ועשרים
and strikes out יריר for יסוד (Neub. reads in R) פירא A; פריא O; פיירה E
RA O כל היום¹² —. הנביא RE add¹¹ —. גדול A¹⁰ —. (מוציאין
R omits till the הקדוש¹⁴ —. שלא תכבה A¹³ —. המיד כל היום E
—¹⁵ ספרים לשם A¹⁹ —. מי RA omit¹⁸ —. יש שם A¹⁷ —. ובית O¹⁶ —. ספרים
—²⁰ A O invert: שם להתפלל —. על עצמן A; על עצמן RO omit²¹ —. להתפלל
חזקאל הנביא till the next passage, from after the next passage, otherwise = text. —²² RA omit
—²³ R וכל E reads בני גדולי ישמעאל²⁵ —. יחזקאל —.

²⁵ In MS. BM follows here a piece that belongs earlier, viz.: beginning
בא, p. שחוק המלך, p. 4 of Ed. Asher, last line, and ending מבנין הקדמונים
line 4; this is not due to misplacing of leaves of BM, for the straying
piece is not on a separate leaf, nor does it begin and end at the first and
last lines but distant from them; therefore the writer of BM must have
had the misplacement before him. At the beginning of the errant piece
he wrote on unconcerned, although the passage gives no sense; but here
he endeavoured to produce some sense by inserting the words which are
here put in brackets between the end of the stray piece and the resumption
of the broken text, viz.: באים (יכניה שגדולי ישמעאל) שם להתפלל
The words גדולי ישמעאל which occur both at the break of the
text and at its resumption, and the mention of יכניה, are suggested from
the part immediately before the irruption, so that it seems that the
copyist became aware of the misplacement and also of the place where
the text had been interrupted.

סח שם להתפלל¹ | מרוב חיבתם ביחזקאל הנביא² וקוראין שמו בר מלחא³. וכל בני ערב באים שם⁴ להתפלל. ושם סמוך לכנסת כחצי מיל קברי חנניה מישאל ועזריה ועל קבריהם כיפות גדולות⁵. ובשעת החירום אין אדם בעולם נוגע בעבריו⁶ של יחזקאל⁷ לרעה לא בישמעאלים ולא ביהודים: ומשם שלש⁸ מילין לעיר קוצונאת⁹ ובה כמו שלש מאות יהודים ושם קבר רב פפא ורב הונא ויוסף סיני¹⁰ ורב יוסף בר חמא ולפני כל אחד ואחד כנסת. ומתפללין שם ישראל בכל יום. ומשם שלש פרסאות לעין שפתה¹¹ ושם קבור¹² נחום האלקושי הנביא¹³. ומשם יום לכפר אל כרם¹⁴ ושם קבור רב חסדא ור' עזריה ור' עקיבא ור' דוסא¹⁵: ומשם חצי יום לכפר מהמדבר¹⁶ ושם קבורים¹⁷ ר' דוד ור' יהודה ואביו ור' קורדיה ורב סחורה ורב אדא¹⁸. ומשם יום¹⁹ לנהר **סט** רגא²⁰. ושם | קברו של צדקיה²¹ המלך ועליו כפה²² גדולה. ומשם יום²³ לעיר קופה ושם קברו של יכניה המלך ועליו²⁴ בניין גדול וכנסת לפניו. ושם²⁵ כמו שבעת אלפים יהודים²⁶. ושם הבמה הגדול' לישמעאלים ששם²⁷ קבור עלי בן אבו טאלב²⁸ חתנו של משוגע²⁹ ובאים שם הישמעאלים לקדשות³⁰:

— ר. מליחא A; בר מליה R³. — מיחזקאל הנביא עליו השלום A². — להתפלל שם A¹. —
⁴ R omits. — A continues ועל כל קבר וקבר כיפה (כפה) A גדולה (R?)⁵. —
⁷ A adds בעבריו E and Ed. C; בקברו A; בעולם R omits⁶. — ושעת החירום (אל קוצונאתו עזריה) E אל קוצונאת A O; אלקוצונאת R⁹. — שלשה A⁸. — עליו השלום —
¹⁰ O = text; R inverts: ור' יוסף ורב הונא, omitting סיני A; סיני R¹⁰. —
¹¹ E omits¹¹. — קבר RA¹². — לעין שפתה של פרסאות: שמה של פרסאות A transposes¹². — עליו השלום A¹⁴. —
¹⁵ R omits ומשם לכפר לפרס (לפרס E) יום A¹⁴. — עליו השלום A adds —
¹⁶ R omits ור' עזריה עקיבא ורבי חסדא ורבי עקיבא ורבי דוסא A; ור' עקיבא —
¹⁷ R omits this passage from ומשם RO¹⁶. — מהמדבר R¹⁷. — קבר R¹⁷. —
¹⁸ R omits this word. — ר' דוד ור' יהודה A; ר' דוד ור' יהודה קבוריה ורב סחורה ורב הונא ורב אדא R¹⁸. —
¹⁹ R omits ורב ורבי יהודה A; ורבי קבוריה ורבי סחורה ורבי אבא O = text, except for the last name —
²⁰ R (Gr.) רגא (Neub.) רגא R (Gr.)²⁰. — מהלך E inserts; חצי יום R¹⁹. —
²¹ A adds השלום A; קבר R; צדקיה RA O²¹. — ליגה E; ליגה A²². —
²³ E omits²⁴. — קופה, after מהלך יום A; יום O has²³. — בימה E —
²⁵ O; אבו טאלב R²⁸. — כי שם R²⁷. — מישראל O²⁶. — ושם O omits²⁵. —
²⁹ R omits from לקדשות O³⁰. — מהמר O; מהמר המשוגע R²⁹. — אבוטלאב —
 and has a | indicating a lacuna, ושם הבמה

TRANSLATION.

p. 59 He built, on the other side of the river, on the banks of an arm of the Euphrates which there borders the city, a hospital consisting of blocks of houses and hospices for the sick poor who come to be healed¹. Here

¹ A valuable work, *Bagdad during the Abbaside Caliphate, from Contemporary Arabic and Persian Sources*, appeared in 1900, written by Mr. Guy Le Strange, which helps to explain Benjamin's account of the Moslem metropolis. The Caliph Mansur in 762 selected it as the Capital of the Empire. Numerous references in the Talmud prove that a Jewish settlement was there long before. Mansur built a double-walled Round City two miles in diameter on the western side of the Tigris. It formed the nucleus of suburbs, which spread over both banks of the Tigris. A very fair idea of the metropolis may be obtained if we imagine the Round City as situated on the Surrey side of the Thames, having the "Elephant and Castle" for its centre. At this spot stood the great Mosque of Mansur, where the Friday services were held, and where the Caliph took a prominent part in the service on the Bairam, at the close of the Ramazan fast. The Round City being subject to periodical inundations, the government buildings were gradually transferred to the eastern side of the river. The Royal Palaces, in the grounds called the Harim, which were fully three miles in extent, occupied the site similar to that from Westminster to the City. At one time there were as many as twenty-three palaces within the royal precincts. The Caliph, when visiting the Mosque in state, left the palace grounds, and proceeded over the main bridge, corresponding to Westminster Bridge, along a road which in Benjamin's time led to the Bazrah Gate quarter. At the close of the ceremony in the Mosque, the Caliph returned, crossing the Bridge of Boats, and proceeded to his palace by a road corresponding to the Thames Embankment. The members of his court and the nobles entered barges and escorted him alongside the river.

The Arab writers mention that certain palaces were used as state prisons, in which the Caliphs kept their nearer relations in honourable confinement. They were duly attended by numerous servants, and amply supplied with every luxury, but forbidden under pain of death to go beyond the walls. Lebrecht, p. 381, explains the circumstances under which the Caliph Moktafi imprisoned his brother and several of his kinsmen. There were large hospitals in Bagdad: the one to which Benjamin alludes is the Birmaristan of the Mustansiriah, in Western Bagdad, which for three centuries was a great school of medical science. Its ruins, close to the present Bridge of Boats, are still to be seen. The reader must bear in mind that at the time when Benjamin visited Bagdad the Seljuk Sultans had been defeated, and the Caliphs stood

there are about sixty physicians' stores which are provided from the Caliph's house with drugs and whatever else may be required. Every sick man who comes is maintained at the Caliph's expense and is medically treated. Here is a building which is called Dar-al-Maristan, where they keep charge of all the demented people who become insane in the towns through the great heat in the summer, and they chain each of them in iron chains until their reason becomes restored to them in the winter-time. Whilst they abide there, they are provided with food from the house of the Caliph, and when their reason is restored they are dismissed and each one of them goes to his house and his home. Money is given to those that have stayed in the hospices on their return to their homes. Every month the officers of the Caliph inquire and investigate whether they have been restored to reason, in which case they are discharged. All this the Caliph does out of charity to those that come to the city of Bagdad, whether they be sick or insane. The Caliph is a righteous man, and all his actions are for good.

In Bagdad there are about 40,000 Jews¹, | and they dwell in p. 60 security, prosperity and honour under the great Caliph, and amongst them are great sages, the heads of Academies engaged in the study of the law. In this city there are ten Academies. At the head of the great Academy is the Rabbi R. Samuel the son of Eli. He is the head of the Academy Gaon Jacob. He is a Levite and traces his pedigree back to Moses our teacher. The head of the second Academy is R. Hanania his brother, warden of the Levites; R. Daniel is the head of the third Academy; R. Elazar the scholar is the head of the fourth Academy; and R. Elazar, the son of Zemach, is the head of the order, and his pedigree reaches to Samuel the prophet, the Korahite. He and his brethren know how to chant the melodies as did the singers at the time when the Temple was standing. He is head of the fifth Academy; R. Hisdai, the glory of the scholars, is head of the sixth Academy; R. Haggai is head of the seventh Academy; and R. Ezra the head of the eighth Academy; R. Abraham who is called higher than ever in power. They, however, took little interest in political affairs, which were left entirely in the hands of their viziers.

¹ Asher and the other printed editions give the Jewish population at 1,000. Pethachiah makes the same estimate, which, however, is inconsistent with his statement, that the Head of the Academy had 2,000 disciples at one time, and that more than 500 surrounded him. The readings of the British Museum and Casanatense MSS. solve the difficulty; the word *forty* is inserted. It would be wearisome to specify in these notes all the places where a superior reading is presented by these MSS.; the student will, however, find that not a few anomalies which confronted Asher are now removed.

Abu Tahir is the head of the ninth Academy; and R. Sakkai, the son of Bostanai the Nasi, is the head of the Sium¹. | These are the ten Batlanim², and they do not engage in any other work than communal administration; and all the days of the week they judge the Jews their countrymen, except on the second day of the week, when they all appear before the Rabbi Samuel, the head of the Yeshiba Gaon (Jacob), who in conjunction with the other Batlanim judges all those that appear before him. And at the head of them all is Daniel the son of Hisdai, who is styled "Our Lord the Head of the Captivity of all Israel." He possesses a book of pedigrees going back as far as David, King of Israel. The Jews call him "Our Lord, Head of the Captivity," and the Mohammedans call him "Saidna ben Daoud," and he has been invested with authority over all the congregations of Israel at the hands of the Emir al Mumenin, the Lord of Islam³. For thus Mohammed commanded concerning him and his descendants, and that the seal of office over all the holy congregations that dwell under his rule be given him, and that every Mohammedan or Jew, or one belonging to any nation in his dominion, should rise up before him (the Exilarch) and salute him, and that any one who should refuse to rise up should receive one hundred stripes⁴. |

p. 62 And every fifth day when he goes to pay a visit to the great Caliph, horsemen, Gentiles as well as Jews, escort him, and heralds proclaim in advance "Make way before our Lord, the son of David, as is due unto him," the Arabic words being "Amilu tarik la Saidna ben Daud." He is mounted on a horse, and is attired in robes of silk and embroidery with a large turban on his head, and from the turban is suspended a long white cloth adorned with a chain upon which the cipher of Mohammed is engraved. Then he appears before the Caliph

¹ The last or tenth Academy.

² This appellation is applied in the Talmud to scholars who uninterruptedly apply themselves to communal work.

³ The first line of Exilarchs which ended with Hezekiah in the year 1040 traced their descent from David through Zerubbabel. Hisdai's pedigree must have been through Hillel, a female branch of the Royal line (see Grätz, vol. VI, note 10). Pethachiah writes (p. 19) that a year before his arrival at Bagdad Daniel died. A nephew, David, became Exilarch jointly with R. Samuel, the Head of the great Academy, whose authority over all the communities in Asia became paramount. Samuel had an only daughter, who was learned in the Scriptures and the Talmud. She gave instruction through a window, remaining in the house, whilst the disciples were below, unable to see her.

⁴ The office of Exilarch had but recently been revived, and the Mohammed here referred to may have been Mohammed El Moktafi, the Caliph Mostanshed's predecessor.

and kisses his hand, and the Caliph rises and places him on a throne which Mohammed had ordered to be made for him, and all the Mohammedan princes who attend the court of the Caliph rise up before him. And the Head of the Captivity is seated on his throne opposite to the Caliph, in compliance with the command of Mohammed to give effect to what is written in the law—"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah nor a law-giver from between his feet, until he come to Shiloh: and to him shall the gathering of the people be." And the authority of the Head of the Captivity extends over all the communities of Shinar, Persia, Khorasan and Saba which is Al Yemen, and Diar Kalach and all the land of Aram Naharaim (Mesopotamia), the dwellers in the mountains of Ararat and the land of the Alans¹, which is a land surrounded by mountains and has no outlet except by the iron gates which Alexander made, but which were afterwards broken. Here are the people called Alani. His authority extends also over the land of Siberia, and the communities in the land of the Togarmim unto the mountains of Asveh and the land of Gurgan the inhabitants of which are called Gurganim who dwell by the river Gihon², and these are the Girkarshi who

¹ The Alans throughout the Middle Ages occupied Georgia and the regions of the Caucasus. As to the Iron Gates which Alexander made, Yule in commenting on Marco Polo's text (*Travels of Ser Murco Polo*: edited by Sir Henry Yule, 3rd edition, London, John Murray, chap. iii) says that Benjamin was the first European traveller to mention this pass. Benjamin and Marco Polo both record the general belief current at the time that the Pass of Derbend was traversed by Alexander. It is still called in Turkish "Demis-Kapi" or the Iron Gate, and the Persians designate it "Sadd-i-Iskandar"—the Rampart of Alexander. Lord Curzon, however, in his valuable work *Persia and the Persians*, vol. I, p. 293, conclusively proves that the pass through which Alexander's army marched when pursuing Darius after the battle of Arbela could not have been at Derbend. Arrian, the historian of Alexander's expeditions, writes that the pass was one day's journey from Rages (the noted city mentioned in the Book of Tobit) for a man marching at the pace of Alexander's army. But Derbend is fully 500 miles from Rages. In Lord Curzon's opinion, confirmed by Spiegel, Droysen and Schindler, the Sirdara Pass, some forty miles from Teheran on the way to Meshed, must have been the defile which Alexander's army forced. I think it will be found that Marco Polo's geography is less reliable than that of Benjamin. In the third chapter referred to above, Marco Polo speaks of the Euphrates falling into the Caspian Sea.

² Probably the Oxus, called by the Arabs "Jaihun." Rabad I, a contemporary of Benjamin, speaks of the land of Gurgan in like terms in his *Sefer Hakabalah*.

follow the Christian religion. Further it extends to the gates of Samarkand, the land of Tibet, and the land of India. In respect of all these countries the Head of the Captivity gives the communities

p. 63 power to appoint | Rabbis and Ministers who come unto him to be consecrated and to receive his authority. They bring him offerings and gifts from the ends of the earth. He owns hospices, gardens and plantations in Babylon, and much land inherited from his fathers, and no one can take his possessions from him by violence. He has a fixed weekly revenue arising from the hospices of the Jews, the markets and the merchants, apart from that which is brought to him from far-off lands. The man is very rich, and wise in the Scriptures as well as in the Talmud, and many Israelites dine at his table every day.

At the installation of the Head of the Captivity, he gives much money to the Caliph, to the Princes and the Ministers. On the day that the Caliph performs the ceremony of investing him with his authority, he rides in the second of the royal equipages, and is escorted from the palace of the Caliph to his own house with timbrels and fifes. The Exilarch appoints the Chiefs of the Academies by placing his hand upon their heads, thus installing them in their office¹. The Jews of the city are learned men and very rich. |

p. 64 In Bagdad there are twenty-eight Jewish Synagogues situated either in the city itself or on the other side of the Tigris; for the river divides the city into two parts. The great synagogue of the Head of the Captivity has columns of marble of various colours overlaid with silver and gold, and on these columns are sentences of the Psalms in golden letters. And in front of the ark are about ten steps of marble; on the topmost step are the seats of the Head of the Captivity and of the Princes of the House of David. The city of Bagdad is twenty miles in circumference, situated in a land of palms, gardens and plantations, the like of which is not to be found in the whole land of Shinar. People come thither with merchandise from all lands. Wise men live there, philosophers who know all manner of wisdom, and magicians expert in all manner of witchcraft.

Thence it is two days to Gazigan which is called Resen. It is a large city containing about 5,000 Jews. In the midst of it is the Synagogue of Rabah²—a large one. He is buried close to the Synagogue, and beneath his sepulchre is a cave where twelve of his pupils are buried.

p. 65 Thence it is a day's journey | to Babylon, which is the Babel of old,

¹ It is interesting to compare this account with that of the Installation of the Egyptian Nagid (*J. Q. R.*, IX, p. 717).

² This is a well-known sage, whose name often occurs in the Talmud.

that now lies in ruins thirty miles in extent¹. The ruins of the palace of Nebuchadnezzar are still to be seen there, but people are afraid to enter them on account of the serpents and scorpions. Near at hand within a distance of a mile there dwell 3,000 Israelites who pray in the Synagogue of the Pavilion of Daniel, which is ancient, and was erected by Daniel. It is built of hewn stones and bricks. Between the Synagogue and the Palace of Nebuchadnezzar is the furnace into which were thrown Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, and the site of it lies in a valley² known unto all.

Thence it is five parasangs to Hillah, where there are 10,000 Israelites and four Synagogues; that of R. Meir, who lies buried before it; the Synagogue of Markeshisha, who is buried in front of it; also the Synagogue of Rab Seiri, the son of Chama, and the Synagogue of R. Mari; the Jews pray there every day.

Thence it is four miles to the Tower of Babel, which the generation whose language was confounded, built of the bricks called Agur. The length of its foundation is about two miles, the breadth of the tower is about forty cubits, and the length thereof | two hundred p. 66 cubits. At every ten cubits' distance there are slopes which go round the tower by which one can ascend to the top³. One can see from

¹ The Babel of Bible times was captured by Sennacherib; after stopping up a dam of the Euphrates, the country was placed under water and the city destroyed. Nebuchadnezzar restored the city, he also erected a magnificent palace for himself—the Kasr—also the Temple of Bel. Herodotus, Book I, chaps. 178-89, fully describes these edifices, and dwells upon the huge extent of the metropolis, which was estimated to have a circuit of fifty miles. Xerxes destroyed the city. Alexander the Great contemplated the restoration of Bel's Temple, but as it would have taken two months for 10,000 men to merely remove the rubbish, he abandoned the attempt. The ruins have been recently explored by Germans. The embankments which regulated the flow of the Euphrates and Tigris have given way, and at the present time the whole region round Babylon is marshy and malarious. In the words of Jeremiah; li. 43, "Her cities are a desolation, a sterile land, and a wilderness, a place wherein no man dwelleth."

² The Valley of Dura mentioned in Daniel iii. 1 is here referred to. See Dr. Berliner's *Beiträge zur Geographie und Ethnographie Babylonien*; also Layard's *Nineveh and Babylon*, p. 515.

³ Bereshith Rabba, chap. xxxviii, says the tower was at Borsippa, and the ruins here spoken of are probably those of the Birs Nimroud, fully described by Layard, *Nineveh and Babylon*, chap. xxii. p. 496. He says: "The mound rises abruptly to the height of 198 feet, and has on its summit a compact mass of brickwork 37 feet high by 28 broad. . . . On one side of it, beneath the crowning masonry, lie huge fragments

there a view twenty miles in extent, as the land is level. There fell fire from heaven into the midst of the tower which split it to its very depths.

Thence it is half a day to Kaphri, where there are about 200 Jews. Here is the Synagogue of R. Isaac Napcha, who is buried in front of it. Thence it is three parasangs to the Synagogue of Ezekiel, the prophet of blessed memory, which is by the river Euphrates¹. It is fronted by sixty turrets, and between each turret there is a minor Synagogue, and in the court of the Synagogue is the ark, and at the back of the Synagogue is the sepulchre of Ezekiel. It is surmounted by a large cupola, and it is a very handsome structure. It was built of old by King Jeconiah, king of Judah, and the 35,000 Jews who came with him, when Evil-merodach brought him forth out of prison. This place is by the river Chebar on the one side, and by the river Euphrates on the other, and the names of Jeconiah and those that accompanied him are engraved on the wall; Jeconiah p. 67 at the top, and Ezekiel | at the bottom. This place is held sacred by Israel as a lesser sanctuary unto this day, and people come from a distance to pray there from the time of the New Year until the Day of Atonement. The Israelites have great rejoicings on these occasions. Thither also come the Head of the Captivity, and the Heads of the Academies. Their camp extends over a space of two miles, and Arab merchants come there as well. A great gathering like a fair takes place, which is called Fera, and they bring forth a scroll of the law written on parchment by Ezekiel the Prophet,

torn from the pile itself. The calcined and vitreous surface of the bricks, fused into rock-like masses, show that their fall may have been caused by lightning. The ruin is rent almost from top to bottom. No traces whatever now remain of the spiral passage spoken of by the Jewish traveller." Cf. Professor T. K. Cheyne's article, "The Tower of Babel," in the new *Biblical Cyclopaedia*. Nebuchadnezzar, in his Borsippa inscription, records that the tower, which had never originally been completed, had fallen into decay, and that the kiln-bricks had split. These are the Agur bricks mentioned by Benjamin; cf. Isaiah xxvii. 9. Al-ajur is the word still used by the Arabs for kiln-burnt bricks.

¹ Niebuhr, vol. II, 216, gives a full account of his visit to the tomb. Layard, speaking of Birs Nimroud, says: "To the south-west in the extreme distance rise the palm-trees of Kifl, casting their scanty shade over a small dome, the tomb of Ezekiel. To this spot occasionally flock in crowds, as their forefathers have done for centuries, the Jews of Bagdad, Hillah, and other cities of Chaldea. . . . It is now but a plain building, despoiled of the ornaments and MSS. which it once appears to have contained" (*Nineveh and Babylon*, p. 500). Alcharizi composed a beautiful ode when visiting this tomb (chap. xxxv, also chap. L).

and read from it on the Day of Atonement. A lamp burns day and night over the sepulchre of Ezekiel; the light thereof has been kept burning from the day that he lighted it himself, and they continually renew the wick thereof, and replenish the oil unto the present day. A large house belonging to the sanctuary is filled with books, some of them from the time of the first temple, and some from the time of the second temple, and he who has no sons consecrates his books to its use. The Jews that come thither to pray, from the land of Persia and Media, bring the money which their countrymen have offered to the Synagogue of Ezekiel the Prophet. The Synagogue owns property, lands and villages, which belonged to King Jeconiah, and when Mohammed came he confirmed all these rights to the Synagogue of Ezekiel¹. Distinguished Mohammedans also come hither to pray, | so great is their love for Ezekiel the Prophet; and they p. 68 call it Bar (Dar) Melicha (the Dwelling of Beauty). All the Arabs come there to pray².

At a distance of about half a mile from the Synagogue are the sepulchres of Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, and upon their sepulchres are large cupolas; and at times of disturbance no man would dare touch the Mohammedan or Jewish servants who attend at the sepulchre of Ezekiel.

Thence it is three miles to the city of Kotsonath, where there are 300 Jews. Here are the sepulchres of Rab Papa, Rab Huna, Rab Joseph Sinai, and Rab Joseph ben Hama; and before each of them is a Synagogue where the Israelites pray every day. Thence it is three parasangs to Ain Siptha, where there is the sepulchre of the prophet

¹ This Mohammed, as in the case referred to p. 61, must have been a predecessor of the reigning Caliph, as the Prophet never was in Babylonia, and in no case would he have granted favours to the Jews. It should be noted that the British Museum MS. on which our text is based, as well as the Casanatense MS., generally style the Prophet הכשית. The MS., on which the Constantinople *editio princeps* is based, had probably all passages where this epithet or other objectionable remarks were used excised by the censor, and it will be seen that the passage before us, with reference to the grant of land by Mohammed, as well as that on p. 69, referring to Ali, the son-in-law of Mohammed, do not appear in any of the printed editions. Dr. Hirschfeld is of opinion that, on the one hand, the epithet is the translation of the Arabic *majhūn*, a term against which Mohammed protested several times in the Koran, because it means possessed by a *jin*, like a soothsayer. On the other hand, the word was chosen having regard to Hosea ix. 7. This was done long before Benjamin's time, by Jefeth and others.

² See picture of the traditional tomb of Ezekiel in the *Jewish Encyclopaedia*, vol. V, p. 315.

Nahum the Elkoshite. Thence it is a day's journey to Kefar Al-Keram, where are the sepulchres of Rab Chisdai, R. Azariah, R. Akiba, and R. Dosa. Thence it is a half-day's journey to a village in the desert, where there are buried R. David and R. Jehuda and Abaji, R. Kurdiah, Rab Sechora, and Rab Ada. Thence it is a p. 69 day's journey to the river Raga, where | there is the sepulchre of King Zedekiah. Upon it is a large cupola. Thence it is a day's journey to the city of Kufa, where there is the sepulchre of King Jeconiah. Over it is a big structure, and in front thereof is a Synagogue. There are about 7,000 Jews here. At this place is the large mosque of the Mohammedans, for here is buried Ali ben Abi Talib, the son-in-law of Mohammed, and the Mohammedans come hither

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(To be continued.)